

offer, and it is not being offered out in rural Nebraska. It does not infringe on a company that has TV franchise. They are still protected by this bill, so I would ask for the advancement of the bill, when we come to that.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Lamb, with Senator Moore on deck.

SENATOR LAMB: Well, Mr. President and members, I would like to address some of the concerns of Senator Rod Johnson, and I appreciate from where he is coming because I don't want to get into competition with private enterprise. However, I think we should recognize that the Rural Electric Administration has done great things for the power industry in this state, and we do not have private power, and so we could say that we are in competition with private industry in that regard, because in most states private industry does supply the public power. But the advantages of the bill are that in these rural areas, we have a network already established. We have a rural electric system that bills these rural people on a monthly basis. So, it is a very easy, very cost effective method of also billing these same people for the programming. As you know, when these dishes first became popular, the programs were not scrambled. They were not scrambled and so you bought a dish and you had virtually unlimited television. Well, now as we go along, these programs are becoming scrambled because the owners of those programs say they need to be paid which is somewhat logical. Now the difficulty becomes evident when you look at the charges and the inefficiencies in the system where a person will subscribe to a certain program, be billed from a certain company. The rural electrics on a national scale are offering this programming on a wholesale basis so that they are in a position to offer a number of channels to their customers and on a nonprofit basis and, thereby, they can do it efficiently and cheaper than you can do on a channel by channel system. So I think overall that the risks are almost nonexistent in getting into competition with private enterprise, that we have them taken out of the sale. They cannot sell dishes or television sets, and this latest amendment by Senator Rogers and myself makes clear that it is not in competition with cable. We don't want to be in competition with cable, and actually I don't think there is any problem there anyway because who in the world is going out and buying an expensive dish, then pay for the programs, when you can do the same thing if you are in a cable area and not have to buy the dish, and I don't think it is cost effective to go the dish route is you are in a cable area. But